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FM AMCONSUL MUMBAI

TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4021
INFO RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI IMMEDIATE 5313
RUEHBI/AMCONSUL MUMBAI IMMEDIATE 8785
RUEHCG/AMCONSUL CHENNAI IMMEDIATE 1134
RUEHCI/AMCONSUL CALCUTTA IMMEDIATE 1042
RUEHIL/AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD IMMEDIATE 0596
RUEHLH/AMCONSUL LAHORE IMMEDIATE 0088
RUEHKP/AMCONSUL KARACHI IMMEDIATE 0203
RUEHKT/AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU IMMEDIATE 0492
RUEHLM/AMEMBASSY COLOMBO IMMEDIATE 0607
RUEHKA/AMEMBASSY DHAKA IMMEDIATE 0588

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 MUMBAI 001292

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SCA/INS, OPS CENTER, DS, DS/IP/ITA, DS/IP/SCA, DS/DSCC,
CA/OCS/ACS

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PTER](#) [KISL](#) [AEMR](#) [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [IN](#)

SUBJECT: MULTIPLE TRAIN BOMBINGS KILL OVER 180 AT HEIGHT OF EVENING
RUSH HOUR IN MUMBAI

Summary

¶11. (U) Over 180 persons died and over 500 were injured in a series of nearly simultaneous bomb explosions on seven trains on July 11 in Mumbai. The bombings occurred in overflowing trains at the height of the city's evening rush hour. All official Americans and their family members are accounted for. Several Consulate Foreign Service Nationals (FSNs) were aboard the bombed trains, but none suffered serious injuries. No group has taken credit for the bombings, and the police have yet to announce any suspects, but the timing and execution of the bombings point towards a professional, organized group. The media and eyewitnesses at the scenes roundly criticized the official emergency response. Initially, hospitals were struggling to deal with the inflow of injured, but were reportedly mastering the situation as of mid-day local time (2:30am EDT) on July 12. Life quickly returned to normal in the city, India's commercial and financial capital, on July 12. End summary.

Seven Trains Bombed

¶12. (U) On July 11 bombs went off within minutes of each other on seven separate trains during the height of the evening rush hour on Mumbai's Western Railway Line. The rush hour blasts occurred from 1824 to 1835 hours local time. Apparently, all of the bombs were planted inside the train cars and detonated as the trains were at or near these railway stations: Khar, Mahim, Matunga, Jogeshwari, Borivili, Bhayande, and Santa Cruz. Initial reports of an eighth defused bomb found in Borivili station seem to be false. Investigation into explosive type and delivery system are still underway.

¶13. (U) Mumbai's three suburban railway lines are the most densely traveled in the world, transporting over 6 million passengers each day. Trains are 9-12 coaches long. Although each coach is designed to accommodate around 100 sitting passengers, the actual number can easily double or triple during rush hour. The bombings created an initial wave of panic among the passengers. Many sustained injuries when attempting to exit from moving trains, according to Consulate eyewitness accounts and media reports.

¶14. (U) The Consulate's Emergency Action Committee convened at

2030 local time on July 11. Later than evening the Consulate issued a warden message.

Casualties

¶5. (U) As of noon local time on July 12 (2:30am EDT) police and hospital sources estimate that 183 people died and over 663 were injured in the attacks. The number of casualties is expected to grow in the coming hours. While several Consulate FSNs were aboard the bombed trains, no Consulate personnel were killed or suffered serious physical injury (Note: Post is requesting assistance from the regional psychiatrist to deal with potential mental and emotional issues. End note.) We have no information on any American casualties, but are in contact with local hospitals and otherwise investigating this possibility.

Suspects

¶6. (U) While this was clearly a terrorist attack, no group has claimed responsibility so far. Indian intelligence reportedly considers Lakshar-e-Toiba (LeT) a prime suspect. The group has publicly denied this allegation. There have been no formal accusations, however, and police are investigating multiple possibilities at this time, according to reports.

Police and Emergency Response Efforts

¶7. (U) Police and emergency response was inadequate, according to news reports, other Consulate contacts and Consulate FSNs on the scene. Live coverage showed ordinary citizens still pulling victims out of trains and carrying the injured away on

MUMBAI 00001292 002 OF 002

bed-sheets or by hand hours after the explosions occurred. These citizens also took many of the injured to nearby hospitals. Commentators and ordinary citizens voiced anger at the absence of a rapid official response. One fire brigade chief told the media that his station only received a call for assistance at 7:15 pm, long after the explosions had taken place. Eventually, police did set up city wide road blocks along major arterial roads in an attempt to catch any suspects. Security was tightened at all major railway stations, temples, and major monuments in and around Mumbai. The international airport was put on high alert, but remained open.

¶8. (U) Police publicly stated that they had no indication these attacks would occur and were not on alert. However, an officer in the city's Anti-Terrorism Squad said police had received numerous telephone calls regarding possible railway bombings beginning in March, and suspected the calls were being used to gauge police response times.

¶9. (U) The injured are being treated at Lilavati, Cooper, Hinduja, KEM, Bhabha and Nanavati hospitals, all of which are located in the immediate and outer northern suburbs of the city.

The explosions took place several miles away from south Mumbai hospitals used by the Consulate, and we have no reports on the extent to which these facilities were involved in the emergency response. Hospitals treating the victims reportedly were overwhelmed initially but are managing effectively at present. They report adequate supplies of blood. Post is attempting to acquire patient admissions rosters and is in communication with other consulates regarding the existence of foreign casualties.

¶10. (U) At around 1900 Tuesday, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh held an emergency cabinet meeting. Thereafter Home Minister Patel, Railways Minister Yadav, and Congress Party President Sonia Gandhi were to travel to Mumbai to help supervise investigative, relief and recovery efforts.

Life Quickly Returns to Normal

¶11. (U) The bombings halted all train service in and around Mumbai for several hours. However, as of mid-day on July 12 all western line trains were running with short delays. No delays were reported on the city's other two north-south trunk lines that bring millions of commuters into the city center in the southern tip of the peninsula each day. Our contacts tell us that otherwise travel is normal and that the trains are even full of school children. Additional buses have been deployed as well. Schools and colleges are open, so are shops and businesses, with the exception of the city's diamond markets.

¶12. (U) Cell phone and land line service was disrupted until late on July 11, but has since returned to normal. Post personnel communicated by radio during the down time. The city's stock markets largely ignored the bombings, which had no impact on either volumes or prices. Offices in the city's large financial district are reportedly fully staffed.

¶13. (U) There have not yet been any reports of tension between Muslim and non-Muslim groups as life quickly returned to normal in the city. Several of the bombings took place in predominantly Muslim neighborhoods. The media reported that large groups of Muslim residents immediately came to the help of the victims of the bombings.

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